

REMARKS

Claims 1,3,13 and 15 have been cancelled. Support for the amendment to claim 8 can be found, for example, at page 9, lines14-24 of the specification and claim 22. Withdrawn claims 2, 4-7 and 19-23 have been amended to depend, either directly or indirectly, from process claim 8. New claims 24-28 also depend, either directly or indirectly, from process claim 8.

Support for new claims 24 and 25 can be found, for example, at page 9, lines14-24 of the specification. Support for new claim 26 can be found in original claim 6. Support for new claim 27, can be found, for example, in original claim 2. Support for new claim 28, can be found, for example, in original claim 10. No new matter has been added.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 13 and15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102, for allegedly being anticipated by Szlufcik et al. (US 2004/0063326). The cancellation of claims 13 and 15 renders the rejection moot.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 8-16 stand rejected under 35 USC §103 for allegedly being obvious over Yamazaki (US 6,133,119) in view of Ichinose et al. (US 5,688,366). The amendment to claim 8 renders the rejection moot.

Yamazaki (US 6,133,119) teaches a process for etching of silicon surfaces. A 2% NaOH aqueous solution is applied over the surface. See col. 11, lines 55-64. The medium is aqueous and not thickened.

Ichinose et al. (US 5,688,366) discloses etching a transparent conductive film (SnO₂, InO₃, ITO) with a solution that is mixed together with fine resin particles to form a paste. All examples use acidic etching compositions and the liquids are thickened with macromolecular

resin particles. Ichinose is silent regarding the etching of silicon surfaces and silent with respect to etching components which are organic or inorganic bases.

Even a combination of the references would not lead a skilled worker to the present invention. Neither Yamazaki nor Ichinose et al. teach or suggest a thickened, alkaline liquid etching medium which comprises an etching component that is an organic or inorganic base having a concentration of from 5 to 48% by weight. Both references are particularly silent regarding an alkaline etching medium comprising 0.5 to 25% by weight of a thickener.

Based on the above remarks it is respectfully requested that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 be withdrawn.

No fee is believed to be due with this response, however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this response or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-3402.

Respectfully submitted,

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